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ABSTRACT

Values education has become an important theme in social studies education in recent years. Although long ignored, moral education, as the British call it, is being emphasized as the pressures on and needs of children in a fast-paced society have become evident. Professional organizations have conducted workshops on the topic of values education. On the "how to" level, the Americans have produced a variety of programs, curriculum materials, and teacher guides that are of use to the social studies teacher. Sources of such materials include the Social Science Education Consortium's "Data Book" and the November 1973 issue of "Social Education." A variety of books in education dealing with increasing options in teaching are relevant to moral educators. Projects such as "Man: A Course of Study" include extensive teacher training programs. As values education gains a legitimate place in the curriculum, teachers will feel increasingly free about incorporating a value orientation into other parts of their regular curriculum. (JH)

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WE DON'T CALL IT MORAL EDUCATION: AMERICAN CHILDREN LEARN ABOUT VALUES.

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SUMMARY SHEET

WE DON'T CALL IT MORAL EDUCATION: AMERICAN CHILDREN LEARN ABOUT VALUES.

KEY WORDS: moral education, programs in value education social studies

ABSTRACT: Curriculum programs in the social studies and behavioral sciences provide good examples of how to 'do' morals. A wide variety of multi-media materials, ideas and teacher education programs have been developed in the United States that are relevant for the specialist in moral education.

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When children and adults come together in the formal or semi-formal setting that we call school, social learning is always a part of the curriculum. It may be that the conscious focus of the adults, the children, or both is on the academic aspect of a particular curriculum area. Yet a hidden or partially hidden curriculum of values - of dos and don'ts, of good and bad - is always an accompaniment to the teaching and learning process.

When there is a deliberate attempt to influence ~~the~~ this social interaction through teacher guidance, classroom discussion or class activities - particularly when there is emphasis not only on how people behave, but on the reasons for their behavior and on what desirable kinds of behavior might be - this curriculum of values can be called moral education.

On a visit to England as the Coordinator for the Working Party in Moral Education of the International Humanist and Ethical Union, I was in the fortunate position of being able to compare some of the thinking and 'doing' of morals in british settings with my experiences in american schools. To put my impressions in the briefest possible form: It was my impression that the English have talked and written about moral education more extensively than Americans, and that

the small size of many schools and the relatively decentralized authority have made it possible for Heads to implement policy and get feedback on their results much more rapidly than their american counterparts. How to 'do' morals, however, has been very much left to the discretion and skill of individuals. It is at the 'how to' level that american programs, curriculum materials and teacher guides may be of interest to british readers.

Moral education is a term that is seldom used in the United States. Aside from the fact that is has a Victorian connotation for some people, in the minds of many adults the term is so closely tied to religious indoctrination, that we use a variety of substitute terms to avoid the controversy. There is no quicker way for a teacher to start a tempest in a teapot than to have it rumored that she tried to tamper with the 'morals' of her students.

Moral education under several substitute labels, such as education for living, character education or citizenship education has been singled out for analysis and emphasis in our public schools at various periods during this century. At least in theory, moral education was an integral part of the core curriculum of progressive education. Since Americans put a high value on change and innovation, it has been the fate of many programs to be only partially integrated into the curriculum before they were displaced by newer innovations. Thus, learning by doing was out of fashion with us until it

returned from accross the sea under the label of the 'open classroom' of the British Infant School.

For the past twenty years the only area in the public school curriculum where the learning of values has a recognized place has been in the social studies. As John Dewey originally envisioned the social studies, they were to be the core of the school program, and the clarification of values and the development of the skills of social interaction were an integral part of learning how people live with one another. When Dewey's influence waned, social studies programs became increasingly fact-oriented. Eventually all that remained of his original concept was the substitution of a psychological progression of topics for a chronological one. For young children the study of history no longer began with the cavemen and gradually moved along toward modern times. Rather social studies began with the 'here and now', with family and neighborhood experiences and a gradual progression to unfamiliar topics.

At both elementary and secondary school levels teachers who wished to do so could legitimately incorporate some discussion of personal or social values into the social studies curriculum, but this kind of emphasis was not concretely encouraged or demonstrated im many programs and teacher guides. In recent years as more and more of the stresses of urban life have impinged upon the classroom,

teachers have become increasingly careful not to leave themselves open to the accusation that they were indoctrinating their students. This trend was further accentuated when white and black students were deliberately integrated in the schools, and teachers were warned not to impose their middle-class values on children whose backgrounds might be characterized by alternate values and life styles. At all grade levels teachers retired to the topics that seemed safest and most value-free. When primary school teachers could choose between an extra math or social studies period, they chose to stress more math. When they could chose between a study of the policeman or the fireman, they chose the less controversial community helper. At the secondary level it seemed wise to avoid many aspects of business ethics lest someone become offended. The political process, rather than the platform of political candidates became an appropriate topic for analysis or debate.

Then the pressures and the needs of the children became too much - at least for some of us - to ignore. Suddenly, or almost suddenly, there is renewed talk about value education. Rapid social change and 'future shock' have made us aware that children need help in learning to make decisions. As little as three years ago the only curriculum module on decision making that was available had been developed through private funding by the United Unitarian Association (Beacon Press, 1968). Today several

choices are availbale at every age level. Film strips and film series designed to increse self-awareness, improve the self-image and accentuate values by demonstrating how people are both differnet and alike have proliferated to such an extent that it is difficult to keep track of them. And a few months ago one of my students had the unusual experience of searching in vain for a book on value clarification in every book store in Manhatten, and finding that the book had been sold out in every instance!

Caution about dealing with value-laden topics may characterize most american teachers today, but a change of emphasis is on the up-swing at all grade levels, and it is becoming just a little fashionable to talk about and experiment with value education. Impetus for this movement is coming through the two channels that generally both reflect and direct curriculum change: the prestigious national teacher organizations and the textbook publishing companies.

It is common for five to ten thousand members to gather at the conventions of the major teacher organizations. These meetings generally have one major theme. In 1972 the National Council for the Social Studies chose Value Education as its major theme and had more than a hundred large and small meetings related to this topic over a period of a week. The equally prestigious Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development procured special funding from the National Science Foundation so that it could offer a three-day teacher

education workshop on "Man: A Course of Study"[2] (which deals with what is human about human beings) just prior to its national convention. In the same year, one of this organization's major regional conferences was exclusively devoted to value education.

While social studies is not the only curriculum area to reflect the renewed emphasis on values, the majority of programs that have this focus or that lend themselves to moral education come from this discipline. For libraries, schools and serious students of the social studies the Social Studies Materials Data Book[3] is a primary resource. It is produced by the Social Studies Education Consortium Inc. (SSEC) with support of the National Science Foundation to facilitate the valuation and implementation of the many new curriculum materials which have been developed during the last decade.

The Data Book answers most of the educator's pertinent questions:

> "What materials are available? What do they look like? What do they cost? How long does it take to use them? For whom are they written? Can my students use them? What kind of special training do I need to use them effectively? What did the authors have in mind when they wrote them? What is the content? What methods should I use in teaching - lecture? discussion? indpendent study? Are the materials effective? Has anyone evaluated them to see if students like them and learn when using them?[4]

As of October 1972, seventy-four programs have been

analyzed under the broad headings of project materials, textbooks, games and simulations. The grade span is from Kindergarten through the end of high school and covers subject matter in all of the folowing fields:

Anthropology
American History
Area Studies
Civics/Government
Economonics
Geography
Interdisciplinary
Law
Multidisciplinary
Psychology
Problems of Democracy
Public Issues
Political Science
Sociiology
Social Psychology
Urban Studies
World History

Some programs that could equally well be classified as humanities, literature, science or communications are incorporated.

The format of the Data Book is particularly well suited to the needs of the overseas reader. It not only describes the content and costs, but provides up-to-date information about the publisher's address, the name of the present or former project directors and whether or not the project is still under evaluation or development. Twice a year subscribers to the Data Book receive supplementary sheets to be interleaved or substituted for obsolete references.

For the reader who does not wish to invest in a subscription to the Data Book the special November 1972 Issue of Social Education, the official journal of the National Council for the Social Studies, is a marvelous bargain. The issue is devoted to in-depth evaluations od social studies curriculum projects, programs and materials.

Twenty-six projects are individually analyzed on the basis of product characteristics, rationale and objectives, content, methodology and conditions for implementation. The reader is proviced with an overivew of the Project Materials Analysis which compares each of the twenty-six programs on the basis of grade level, subject matter and types of format. Especially helpful are the guidelines that show which programs have a contemporary focus, a cultural, racial or ethnic focus, flexibility of use and active involvement potential for student and teacher.

The key to the guide lines specifies whether the criteria are present in the materials as published, are present but need teacher modification, or are absent from the program. The specialist in moral education will be particularly interested in the dimension of value conflicts. In nineteen of the programs value conflicts are an integral part of the program as published; in four programs the material can be adapted to emphasize the value dimension.

This special issue of the magazine has several other features that make it an excellent introduction to the moral education potential of american curriculum materials. The reader will find an excellent annotated basic library on the new social studies, an article that looks at the implications of mini-courses and the increased opportunities for students to chose their coursesand a descriptive guide to recently produced realia, print packages, slides, sound materials, games and simulations. The issue also introduces the new reader to a sample of the monthly feature provided by ERIC/CHESS, the clearinghouse for social studies that is one of the branches of the Education Retrieval Information Center.

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Teacher education texts and other educational literature for teachers do not deal with moral education per se, but they contain much that is relevant for the moral educator. In a sense, any book that increases the options for adapting teaching techniques to meet specific needs and purposes is relevant for the moral educator who has recognized that didactic instruction in his field is ineffective.

My favorite paperbacks in this genre are "Encounter in the Classroom" (Hunter 1972) and "In Search of Teaching Style" (Shumsky, 1968). The new book on Value Clarification (Simon, Howe and Kirschenbaum, 1972) consists primarily of concersation starters and games that encourage self-awareness and communication. It can be a helpful resource but we need

to be cautious about putting the book into the hands of the novice teacher. As I see it, the clarification of values is only part of the moral education process. If the sharing and polarization of opinions becomes an end in itsself, the techniques described in the book become a device for ritualizing the abandonment of privacy and voluntary sharing of the self. In the format of this book the discussion topics are listed in no order or hierarchy, so the novice teacher might assume that it is equally worthwhile to encourage students to take a stand on what icecream flavor they like, as on how they feel about different members of their family. A book that puts the opening of the door to student affect into perspective in the curriculum, by showing this opening up to affect to be the first part of a three-stage process, is the sensitive and insightful "Reach, Touch and Teach" (Borton, 1970).

Among other books that are highly recommended to the moral educator must be listed "Toward a Humanistic Education: A Curriculum of Affect" (Weinstein & Fantini, 1970) "Confluent Education" (Brown, 1971) and the earlier volume on which Sidney Simon collaborated, "Values and Teaching: Working with Values in the Classroom" (Raths, Harmin & Simon, 1966).

It could be argued that the greatest influence on teacher style has been effected through the teacher guides and in-service programs that have been tied to specific curriculum projects. British readrs will find an admirably high level of clarity and concreteness in the suggestions to teachers that accompany most american programs. The most outstanding and extensive of the teacher education programs that has been tied to a specific project accompanies "Man: A Course of Study". This comprehensive core program which combines science, mathematics, literature, art, music, games and social studies to focus on what is human about human beings, is not sold to school systems unless it is accompanied by a teacher training program. The teacher education program, as well as the actual core curriculum, has been more thoroughly field tested than any other project; thus the curriculum guides could be used with confidence by workshop leaders and university instructors focusing on moral education.

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Curriculum modules that fall within the province of the moral educator can be found in the middle school and high school programs of many american schools. Environmental studies that stress the need for creating a way of life that is compatible with human needs for aesthetics and recreation as well as health are common. Sex education programs are not prevalent, but are emerging in increasing

numbers. The behavioral sciences, particularly psychology, are being shaped into curriculum modules not only for secondary school use, but for the elementary school level as well. Awareness of the self as an important aspect of growth during the early years, has led to the introduction of many activities in the preschool and primary grades. The capacity for role-taking and an increased awareness of the similarities and differences between people are also increasingly stressed in books and multi-media kits.

This year has seen the fruition of a project that can be called a moral education program by anyone's standards; it is called "First Things: Values" (Guidance Associates, 1972). It consists of a series of sound film strips and accompanying teacher guides. Each film strip in the series presents moral dilemmas carefully organized around basic concepts of truth, promises, fairness, rules and property rights.

In "The Trouble with Truth" a boy who has been given the responsibility of keeping a group of children off a boat while the adults are away is faced with the dilemma about whether or not to"tell on" the youngsters who disobeyed the ruling. In "What Do You Do About Rules", a schoolteacher who is also the superherp "Cheetah" must decide between breaking his oath of secret identity or being thought a criminal by his own son. "You Promised" poses the dilemma of a girl

who promised not to climb trees but cannot save a kitten's life unless she breaks that promise. "But It Isn't Ypurs" deals with property rights, and "That's not Fair" deals with turn-taking and rewards.

In "A Strategy for Teaching Values" educators are introduced to the skills needed for sharpening and balancing the moral conflicts introduced in the dilemmas of the "First Things: Values" film strips, and see a classroom model where children discuss one of the dilemmas. The commentary also serves as an introduction to the stage theory of moral development.

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Specialists in moral education can be encouraged by the increasing emphasis on value education for many reasons: If value education has a legitimate place in the curriculum, children will be exposed to value clarification and moral reasoning at least a small proportion of the time. The teacher guides accompanying these programs will provide ideas and techniques for professionals who probably did not get this kind of guidance in their pre-service training. Perhaps most important of all, if value education has a legitimate place somewhere in the curriculum, teachers will feel increasingly free about incorporating a value orientation into other parts of their regular curriculum. Perhaps then, the hidden curriculum will become a little less hidden from

both teachers and students. When the 'hidden curriculum' becomes exolicit, moral education becomes an integral part of the curriculum.

FOOTNOTES

1. Beacon Press - Decision Making. A Curriculum kit developed by the United Unitarian Association for nine to twelve year olds. Teacher guide by Clyde and Barbara Dodder. Boston, Mass: Beacon Press. 1968.

2. Educational Development Center - Man: A Course of Study. A core curriculum originally designed for fifth gracers consisting of 27 films, 22 student booklets, two records, 6 film strips, 23 maps, posters, photomurals and three educational games. Peter Dow, project director. Cambridge, Mass: Education Development Center , 1970.

3. Social Studies Education Consortium - Data Book. Adress: 855 Broadway, Boulder, Colorado.

4. Ibid. Introduction, March 1971.

5. Social Education - Vol 36, no 7, November 1972.

6. Guidance Associates - First Things: Values. A film strip series developed in consultation with Lawrence Kohlberg, Robert Selman and & Thomas Lickona. Pleasantville, New York: Guidance Associates. 1972.

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